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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/781,686	02/12/2001	Michael A. Peshkin	98,593-E	6130

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MCDONNELL BOEHNEN HULBERT & BERGHOFF
300 SOUTH WACKER DRIVE
SUITE 3200
CHICAGO, IL 60606

EXAMINER

SHAPIRO, JEFFERY A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3653

DATE MAILED: 12/10/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/781,686

Applicant(s)

PESHKIN ET AL.

Examiner

Jeffrey A. Shapiro

Art Unit

3653

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 November 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 1-10 and 14-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kazerooni (US 5,915,673). Kazerooni discloses the following multi-function hub.

As described in Claim 1;

1. a physical interface (222) for providing mechanical support within an assist system;
2. programmable logic for implementing program controlled functions;
(See col. 15, lines 33-35, indicating use of an electronic controller, which necessarily uses programmable logic or a functional equivalent thereof for operation of said controller.)
3. an input/output (I/O) interface for communication to a plurality of computational nodes; (See figures 10, 16 and 19, for example, noting a variety of computational nodes are used throughout the system. See also col. 16, lines 63-67 and col. 17, lines 1-9 and lines 28-35.)

As described in Claims 2 and 3;

4. the programmable logic implements input/output communication functions (see col. 16, lines 33-35 and equations 1-11;)

As described in Claims 4, 6, 14 and 15;

5. the I/O interface provides communication to a plurality of sensors and actuators; (See col. 2, lines 45-67 as well as sensor (60), for example.)

As described in Claims 5, 16, 21-27 and 29-31;

6. an intent sensor (227) (see col. 20, lines 10-15, noting springs 298 and 300—note also screw (294));

As described in Claims 7 and 8;

7. an electrical interface to provide electrical power to a tooling; (Note that air pressure in line (19) to power vacuum or suction cups (18) is necessarily produced and sent through the pneumatic system using electrical connections. Also note that air pressure can be construed as a functional equivalent to electricity supplied to suction cups, which may be construed as a tool.)

As described in Claim 9;

8. user operable controls accessible from outside the hub (note controller (229) housed in housing (244));

As described in Claims 10 and 19;

9. a user interface connectable to an external computer or PDA (personal digital assistant); (Note that the computer/controller of Kazerooni is described in col. 15, lines 33-35 as having I/O capability. This implies that such a computer can be connected with other computers or a PDA, which is a computer.)

As described in Claim 17;

10. user programmable switches on the outside of the hub; (Note that the controller (229) can be pre-programmed (see col. 2, lines 60-64.)

As described in Claim 18;

11. a user display (note that the controller necessarily has to have a user display, or functional equivalent thereof, so as to allow an operator to interface with the system, for pre-programming purposes, for example.)

As described in Claim 20;

12. the physical interface comprises a swivel; (see col. 16, lines 20-22)

As described in Claim 28;

13. the intent sensor (227) is a hall effect sensor (see col. 19, lines 38-42;)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. Claims 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kazerooni in view of Yuan et al.

Kazerooni discloses the hub assist device as described above. Kazerooni further discloses the following.

As described in Claims 11-13;

1. a computer with input/output capability.

Kazerooni does not expressly disclose the following.

As described in Claims 11-13,

2. a network interface in communication with an information network,
LAN, or the internet.

Yuan et al discloses the following.

As described in Claims 11-13,

2. a network interface in communication with an information network,
LAN, or the internet (see figures 5-7 of Yuan et al noting the interface with
a computer network (mini-computer and host-computer interface).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have given the hub system of Kazerooni a teleoperational capability by communicating with an intervening computer system.

The suggestion/motivation would have been to allow an operator to remotely handle objects in harmful locations. See Yuan et al, col. 1, lines 15-17.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Kazerooni and Yuan et al to obtain the invention as specified in Claims 11-13.

Double Patenting

4. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

5. Claims 1-31 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1-29 of copending Application No. 09/781,801. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the both claim a hub assist system with computer control.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 11/27/02 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. It is noted that the Examiner is reading Applicant's claims in their broadest reasonable interpretation. Applicant asserts that Applicant's claims include limitations that are not found in Kazerooni (673') and Yuan et al. Applicant's Independent Claim 1 recites as follows.

A multi-function hub for use in an assist system, comprising:
a physical interface for providing mechanical support within an assist system;
programmable logic for implementing program controlled functions; and
an input/output ("I/O") interface for communication to a plurality of computational nodes.

Kazerooni discloses a hub (217). A hub is defined by Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., as follows.

- 1 : the central part of a circular object (as a wheel or propeller)
- 2 a : a center of activity : FOCAL POINT b : an airport or city through which an airline routes most of its traffic
- 3 : a steel punch from which a working die for a coin or medal is made

The hub is a winch system, as is described by Applicant, which is multi-function. Multi-function means that the apparatus can be used in several modes or environments requiring a particular function. The hub, or winch system can be used in many different functions where an operator requires assist in lifting objects, including, but not limited to, lifting packages, lifting parts for assembly, or other types of objects. Such objects may be different in size and weight, which requires appropriate compensation. As this device so compensates, it can be argued that it is multi-function. Further, this device is usable with a variety of pneumatic material handling devices. See col. 3, lines 34-39 of Kazerooni (673'). It can also be argued that such a system has many components which can perform multiple functions, such as a computer controller (221).

Applicant's Claim 1 also calls for a "physical interface for providing mechanical support within an assist system." The Kazerooni device has such an interface (see figure 1, elements 15-19, for example. This device is an interface having a handle which a person grabs and turns with minimal force to raise or lower an object which

would otherwise require significant effort and force, thereby "assisting" the person in lifting an object by supporting the object.

As for the remaining limitations, the electronic controller (221) is a computer with input/output capability. See col. 15, lines 33-35. A computer inherently requires programmable logic (and, nor, or, nand) to control the functions of the computer and therefore control the functions of the apparatus. Therefore, as shown by this discussion, and a broad, but reasonable interpretation of the claim language of Independent Claim 1, Kazerooni (673') anticipates this claim.

Applicant's further claims are rejected as described previously. In addition, Yuan et al discloses the use of a network interface in communication with an information network, LAN or the internet. Such a network inherently can be used to interface with multiple-computer based devices. Kazerooni (673') discloses use of a computer controller with input/output capability. Such a network would be used by the apparatus of Kazerooni (673') to effectuate teleoperational capability so as to allow the operator to handle objects in hazardous environments. This is considered reasonable motivation one ordinarily skilled in the art would have used to combine Kazerooni (673') and Yuan et al. Therefore, Applicant's claims remain rejected.

It is noted that Applicant has not filed a terminal disclaimer nor responded to the double patenting rejection made in the first office action.

Conclusion

7. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey A. Shapiro whose telephone number is (703)308-3423. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald P. Walsh can be reached on (703)306-4173. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)306-4195 for regular communications and (703)308-2571 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-1113.


Application/Control Number: 09/781,686

Page 10

Art Unit: 3653

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Jeffrey A. Shapiro.

Jeffrey A. Shapiro
Patent Examiner,
Art Unit 3653

A small, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Donald P. Walsh.

DONALD P. WALSH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

December 6, 2002